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LEADFRAME PACKAGE FOR SEMICONDUCTOR DEVICES

INVENTOR

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CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS
(Not Applicable)

STATEMENT RE: FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH/DEVELOPMENT
(Not Applicable)

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention

[001] The present invention relates generally to semiconductor packages and, more particularly, to a leadframe which is adapted to provide improvements in the electrical and thermal performance and the assembly of packaging for transistor devices, such as MOSFET devices.

2. Description of the Related Art

[002] As is known in the electrical arts, certain high power semiconductor devices are fabricated by forming a number of individual, low-power devices in a single semiconductor die or chip, and then "parallelizing" such devices, i.e., connecting the individual devices together in parallel within the package of the device to define a single device capable of higher power

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output. One such device is known as a MOSFET (Metal-Oxide-Semiconductor-Field-Effect-Transistor). MOSFETs and similar devices typically include a die body having a source terminal and a gate terminal disposed on the top surface thereof, and a drain terminal disposed on the bottom surface thereof. In prior art semiconductor packages such as MOSFETs, the source terminal is often connected to the leads of the leadframe of the semiconductor package through the use of multiple, parallel bonded wires. However, the use of such wires often contributes to various deficiencies in the performance of the semiconductor package, including relatively high electrical resistances, high parasitic source-inductance, and the formation of craters and voids in the die caused by the bonding of the wires.

[003] In the prior art, it has been learned that most of the foregoing problems can be eliminated or reduced by replacing the large number of bonded wires from the source terminal of the MOSFET with a single, elongate conductive strap that facilitates the electrical connection of the source terminal to the source leads of the semiconductor package. However, this construction/assembly alternative also has been found to present certain problems. One such problem relates to the differences in the respective thermal coefficients of expansion of the materials of the strap, the semiconductor die (MOSFET), and leadframe. As a result of these differences, these parts experience different amounts of expansion and contraction with changes in the temperature of the semiconductor package. This relative movement of the respective parts causes large sheer stresses to develop in the attachment joints between them, which are typically lap joints of conductive adhesive or solder. These sheer stresses result in degradation of the electrical connection between the strap, die, and substrate and, in particular, in an unacceptably large change or shift in the

critical drain-to-source resistance of the semiconductor die. The present invention addresses these deficiencies by providing a leadframe based semiconductor package for semiconductor devices, such as MOSFET devices, which is adapted to provide improvements in electrical and thermal performance. The structural attributes of the present invention and the advantages attendant thereto will be described in more detail below.

- SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[004] In accordance with the present invention, there is provided a semiconductor package comprising a leadframe which includes a die paddle having an opening formed therein. In addition to the die paddle, the leadframe includes a plurality of leads, at least one of which is disposed in spaced relation to the die paddle. The remaining leads are attached to the die paddle and extend therefrom. Electrically connected to the die paddle is the source terminal of a semiconductor die which also includes a gate terminal and a drain terminal. The gate terminal is itself electrically connected to at least one of the leads disposed in spaced relation to the die paddle. A package body at least partially encapsulates the die paddle, the leads, and the semiconductor die such that portions of the leads and the drain terminal of the semiconductor die are exposed in the package body.

[005] Advantageously, the exposure of the drain terminal of the semiconductor die within the package body allows for the direct electrical connection thereof to an underlying substrate such as a printed circuit board. The source terminal of the semiconductor die may optionally be exposed within the package

body of the semiconductor package as well for providing enhanced thermal performance or heat dissipation capability.

[006] The present invention is best understood by reference to the following detailed description when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[007] These, as well as other features of the present invention, will become more apparent upon reference to the drawings wherein: -

[008] Figure 1 is a top perspective view of a leadframe for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a first embodiment of the present invention;

[009] Figure 2 is a partial cross-sectional view of the semiconductor package of the first embodiment of the present invention;

[0010] Figure 3 is a top perspective view of a leadframe for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a second embodiment of the present invention;

[0011] Figure 4 is a partial cross-sectional view of the semiconductor package of the second embodiment of the present invention;

[0012] Figure 5 is a top perspective view of a leadframe for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a third embodiment of the present invention;

[0013] Figure 6 is a partial cross-sectional view of the semiconductor package of the third embodiment of the present invention;

[0014] Figure 7 is a partial cross-sectional view of a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a fourth

embodiment of the present invention, including the leadframe of the third embodiment shown in Figure 5;

[0015] Figure 8 is a top perspective view of a leadframe for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a fifth embodiment of the present invention;

[0016] Figure 9 is a partial cross-sectional view of the semiconductor package of the fifth embodiment of the present invention;

[0017] Figure 10 is a top perspective view of a leadframe for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a sixth embodiment of the present invention;

[0018] Figure 11 is a partial cross-sectional view of the semiconductor package of the sixth embodiment of the present invention;

[0019] Figure 12 is a top perspective view of a leadframe for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a seventh embodiment of the present invention;

[0020] Figure 13 is a top perspective view of a leadframe for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with an eighth embodiment of the present invention;

[0021] Figure 14 is a top perspective view of a leadframe for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a ninth embodiment of the present invention; and

[0022] Figure 15 is a top perspective view of a leadframe for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a tenth embodiment of the present invention.

[0023] Common reference numerals are used throughout the drawings and detailed description to indicate like elements.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

[0024] Referring now to the drawings wherein the showings are for purposes of illustrating various embodiments of the present invention only, and not for purposes of limiting the same, Figure 1 perspectively illustrates a leadframe 10 for use in a semiconductor package 12 (shown in Figure 2) constructed in accordance with a first embodiment of the present invention. The leadframe 10 comprises a die-attach paddle or die paddle 14 which has a generally quadrangular configuration. As shown in Figure 1, the die paddle 14 has a rectangular configuration, defining an opposed pair of longitudinal peripheral edge segments and an opposed pair of lateral peripheral edge segments. The die paddle 14 defines a generally planar top surface 16 and an opposed, generally planar bottom surface 18. As best seen in Figure 1, formed within one of the corner regions of the die paddle 14 is a generally square or rectangular notch 20. The use of the notch 20 will be described in more detail below. Those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the notch 20 need not necessarily have a square or rectangular configuration, and need not necessarily extend to respective longitudinal and lateral peripheral edge segments of the die paddle 14. For example, as will be described in detail below in relation to an alternative embodiment of the present invention, the notch 20 may be substituted with an aperture disposed within the die paddle of the leadframe.

[0025] In addition to the die paddle 14, the leadframe 10 comprises a plurality of elongate leads 22 which are each attached to and extend from respective ones of the longitudinal peripheral edge segments of the die paddle 14. The leads 22 each define a top surface 25 and an opposed bottom surface 27. In addition to the leads 22, the leadframe 10 includes a single

lead 24 which also defines a top surface 26 and an opposed bottom surface 28. In contrast to the leads 22, the lead 24 is not attached to the die paddle 14. Rather, the lead 24 defines an enlarged inner end 30 which is disposed in spaced relation to the die paddle 14 proximate the notch 20 formed therein. It is contemplated that the leadframe 10 including the die paddle 14 and leads 22, 24 will be fabricated from a conductive metallic material. As shown in Figure 1, a total of seven leads 22 are depicted as being connected to the die paddle 14, though those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that fewer or greater numbers of leads 22 may be included in the leadframe 10.

[0026] The semiconductor package 12 of the first embodiment further includes a semiconductor die 32 including a die body defining opposed, generally planar top and bottom surfaces. Disposed on the top surface of the die body is an enlarged, conductive source terminal 34. As seen in Figure 1, the source terminal 34 is itself generally rectangular, but also includes a notch formed within one of the four corner regions thereof. Also disposed on the top surface of the die body in the notch defined by the source terminal 34 is a gate terminal 36. Disposed on the bottom surface of the die body of the semiconductor die 32 is an enlarged, conductive drain terminal 38. As will be recognized, the structural attributes of the semiconductor die 32 are exemplary of transistor devices, such as MOSFET devices.

[0027] In the semiconductor package 12, the source terminal 34 of the semiconductor die 32 is attached and thus electrically connected to the bottom surface 18 of the die paddle 14. Such connection is preferably accomplished through the use of solder, silver filled epoxy, or a suitable conductive adhesive. The attachment of the semiconductor die 32 to the bottom surface 18

of the die paddle 14 is accomplished such that the gate terminal 36 of the semiconductor die 32 is aligned with and thus exposed within the notch 20 of the die paddle 14 as is seen in Figure 1. As will be recognized, in view of the conductive connection between the semiconductor die 32 and the die paddle 14, those leads 22 which are physically and electrically connected to the die paddle 14 are those which are intended to form the source connection of the semiconductor package 12 when the same is attached to an underlying substrate such as a printed circuit board (PCB). In the semiconductor package 12, the lead 24 which is spaced from the die paddle 14 is electrically connected to the gate terminal 36 via a conductive wire 40 which extends to the top surface 26 of the lead 24.

[0028] The semiconductor package 12 of the first embodiment further comprises a package body 42 which fully encapsulates the die paddle 14 and conductive wire 40, and partially encapsulates the leads 22, 24 and semiconductor die 32. The package body 42 is formed from an encapsulant material which is molded about portions of the leadframe 10, and forms the package body 42 upon hardening. The package body 42 is preferably formed such that portions of the leads 22, 24 protrude from respective ones of opposed longitudinal sides of the package body 42. Additionally, the drain terminal 38 of the semiconductor die 32 is exposed in and substantially flush with the bottom surface of the package body 42 as seen in Figure 2. Advantageously, the drain terminal 38 on the bottom surface of the die body of the semiconductor die 32 is not electrically interconnected, but instead remains exposed after the molding of the package body 42 allowing for direct attachment to an underlying substrate such as a printed circuit board (PCB).

[0029] In the semiconductor package 12, the leads 22, 24 are each bent to assume the configurations shown in Figure 1. More particularly, the leads 22, 24 are bent such that portions of the bottom surfaces 27, 28 thereof adjacent the distal ends are downset relative to the bottom surface 18 of the die paddle 14. In designing the leadframe 10 for the semiconductor package 12, the thickness of the die body of the semiconductor die 32 is taken into account such that the drain terminal 38, the bottom surface of the package body 42, and distal portions of the bottom surfaces 27, 28 of the leads 22, 24 extend in generally co-planar relation to each other. Such relative orientations allow the exposed drain terminal 38 of the semiconductor die 32 to form the drain connection for the semiconductor package 12 by being directly attached and electrically connected to the printed circuit board. As will be recognized, when the leadframe 10 is placed into a mold cavity to facilitate the formation of the package body 42, the drain terminal 38 of the semiconductor die 32 will be placed in direct contact with one surface of such mold cavity. In the semiconductor package 12, the lead 24 forms the gate connection when attached to the printed circuit board. The notch 20 of the die paddle 14 allows a single wire bond to connect the gate terminal 36 of the semiconductor die 32 to the lead 24. As indicated above, the leads 22 of the semiconductor package 12 are those which form the source connections when attached to the printed circuit board.

[0030] Referring now to Figures 3 and 4, there is shown a semiconductor package 44 constructed in accordance with a second embodiment of the present invention. The semiconductor package 44 of the second embodiment is similar in construction to the above-described semiconductor package 12 of the first

embodiment. The distinction in the semiconductor package 44 lies primarily in the configuration of the leadframe 46 thereof. More particularly, the leadframe 46 includes a generally rectangular die paddle 48 which defines opposed pairs of longitudinal and lateral peripheral edge segments. The leadframe 46 also includes leads 50 which are identically configured to the above-described leads 22 and are attached to a common lateral peripheral edge segment of the die paddle 48. In addition to the leads 50, the leadframe 46 includes a lead 52 which is identically configured to the above-described lead 24 and is disposed in spaced relation to that lateral peripheral edge segment of the die paddle 48 having the leads 50 attached thereto and extending therefrom. Like the die paddle 14, the die paddle 48 includes a notch 54 disposed within one of the four corner regions defined thereby proximate to the enlarged inner end 56 of the lead 52.

[0031] Also included in the semiconductor package 44 of the second embodiment is a semiconductor die 58 which is identically configured to the above-described semiconductor die 32. The attachment and electrical connection of the semiconductor die 58 to the leadframe 46 in the semiconductor package 44 of the second embodiment is completed in the same manner described above in relation to the semiconductor package 12 of the first embodiment. The encapsulation of portions of the semiconductor die 58 and leadframe 46 with an encapsulating material to form a package body 60 of the semiconductor package 44 also occurs in the same manner described above in relation to the semiconductor package 12. However, as will be recognized, in the completed semiconductor package 44 of the second embodiment, the leads 50, 52 protrude from only one lateral side of the package body 60 since the leads 50, 52 extend along only one common lateral

peripheral edge segment of the die paddle 48 of the leadframe 46 as indicated above.

[0032] Referring now to Figures 5 and 6, there is shown a semiconductor package 62 constructed in accordance with a third embodiment of the present invention. The semiconductor package 62 includes a leadframe 64 which comprises a generally rectangular die paddle 66 defining opposed pairs of longitudinal and lateral peripheral edge segments. The die paddle 66 further defines a generally planar top surface 68 and an opposed, generally planar bottom surface 70. Formed within one of the corner regions of the die paddle 66 is a generally square or rectangular notch 72.

[0033] In addition to the die paddle 66, the leadframe 64 comprises a plurality of leads 74 which are each attached to and extend from one of the lateral peripheral edge segments of the die paddle 66. The leads 74 each define a top surface 76 and an opposed bottom surface 78. Each of the leads 74 further defines a half-etched surface 80 which is also disposed in opposed relation to the top surface 76 and is laterally offset or perpendicularly recessed relative to the bottom surface 78.

[0034] In addition to the leads 74, the leadframe 64 includes a plurality of leads 82 which also each define a top surface 84, a bottom surface 86 which is disposed in opposed relation to the top surface 84, and a half-etched surface 88 which is also disposed in opposed relation to the top surface 84 and laterally offset or perpendicularly recessed relative to the bottom surface 86. Each of the leads 82 further defines an enlarged inner end 90. In contrast to the leads 74, the leads 82 are not attached to the die paddle 66. Rather, one of the leads 82 is disposed along but spaced from that lateral peripheral edge segment of the die paddle 66 having the leads 74 attached

thereto, with such lead 82 being proximate the notch 72 formed in the die paddle 66. The remaining leads 82 are disposed along but spaced from the remaining, opposed lateral peripheral edge segment of the die paddle 66. It is contemplated that the leadframe 64 will also be fabricated from a conductive metallic material. As shown in Figure 5, a total of three leads 74 and five leads 72 are included in the leadframe 64, though those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that fewer or greater numbers of leads 74, 82 may be included therein.

[0035] The semiconductor package 62 of the third embodiment further includes a semiconductor die 92 which is identically configured to the above-described semiconductor die 32. The semiconductor die 92 includes a die body defining opposed, generally planar top and bottom surfaces. Disposed on the top surface of the die body is an enlarged, conductive source terminal 94. The source terminal 94 is itself generally rectangular, but also includes a notch formed within one of the four corner regions thereof. Also disposed on the top surface of the die body in the notch defined by the source terminal 94 is a gate terminal 96. Disposed on the bottom surface of the die body of the semiconductor die 92 is an enlarged, conductive drain terminal 98.

[0036] In the semiconductor package 62 of the third embodiment, the source terminal 94 of the semiconductor die 92 is attached and thus electrically connected to the bottom surface 70 of the die paddle 66. Such connection is preferably accomplished through the use of solder, silver filled epoxy, or a suitable conductive adhesive. The attachment of the semiconductor die 92 to the bottom surface 70 of the die paddle 66 is accomplished such that the gate terminal 96 of the semiconductor die 92 is aligned with and thus exposed within the notch 72 of the die

paddle 66 as is seen in Figure 5. The lead 82 which is disposed proximate the notch 72 is electrically connected to the gate terminal 96 via a conductive wire 99 which extends to the top surface 84 of such lead 82 at the inner end 90 thereof.

[0037] The semiconductor package 62 of the third embodiment further comprises a package body 100 which fully encapsulates the die paddle 66 and conductive wire 99, and partially encapsulates the leads 74, 82 and semiconductor die 92. The package body 100 is formed in the same manner described above in relation to the package body 42 of the first embodiment. The package body 100 is preferably formed such that the bottom surfaces 78, 86 of the leads 74, 82 are exposed in and substantially flush with the bottom surface of the package body 100. Additionally, as seen in Figure 6, the outer, distal ends of the leads 74, 82 are exposed in and substantially flush with respective ones of the multiple side surfaces defined by the package body 100. Further, the drain terminal 98 of the semiconductor die 92 is exposed in and substantially flush with the bottom surface of the package body 100. The exposure of the drain terminal 98 in the package body 100 allows for direct attachment to an underlying substrate.

[0038] As seen in Figure 6, the encapsulant material used to form the package body 100 underfills and thus covers the half-etched surfaces 80, 88 of the leads 74, 82, thus enhancing the mechanical interlock therebetween. Those leads 82 of the set extending along the lateral peripheral edge segment of the die paddle 66 opposite that having the leads 74 attached thereto may be used as additional source leads, depending on the application for the semiconductor package 62. The lead 82 disposed closest to the leads 74 forms the gate connection when attached to an underlying substrate such as a printed circuit board. The leads

74 are those which form the source connections for the semiconductor package 62 when attached to the printed circuit board.

[0039] Referring now to Figure 7, there is shown a semiconductor package 102 constructed in accordance with a fourth embodiment of the present invention. The semiconductor package 102 is identically configured to the semiconductor package 62 of the third embodiment in all respects, except that the package body 104 of the semiconductor package 102 is formed of reduced thickness as compared to the package body 100. More particularly, the thickness of the package body 104 is such that the top surface 68 of the die paddle 66 of the leadframe 64 also included in the semiconductor package 102 is exposed in and substantially flush with the top surface of the package body 104. As will be recognized, the exposure of the top surface 68 of the die paddle 66 in the top surface of the package body 104 in the semiconductor package 102 provides increased thermal performance and the ability for external heatsinking. Additionally, the reduced thickness of the package body 104 allows for a reduction in the total package height of the semiconductor package 102.

[0040] Referring now to Figures 8 and 9, there is shown a semiconductor package 106 constructed in accordance with a fifth embodiment of the present invention. The semiconductor package 106 of the fifth embodiment is substantially similar in construction to the above-described semiconductor package 62 of the third embodiment. The distinction lies in the configuration of the leadframe 108 of the semiconductor package 106 in comparison to the leadframe 64 of the semiconductor package 62. More particularly, the leadframe 108 is identical to the leadframe 64 in all respects, except that those leads 82 of the

leadframe 64 extending along the lateral peripheral edge segment of the die paddle 66 opposite that including the leads 74 attached thereto are omitted in the leadframe 108. As a result of such omission, the die paddle 110 of the leadframe 108 may optionally be formed to be of larger size as compared to the die paddle 66, thus allowing for the attachment of a semiconductor die 112 thereto which is larger than the above-described semiconductor die 92 while keeping the overall footprint of the semiconductor package 106 substantially the same as that of the semiconductor package 62. The omission of the aforementioned set of leads 82 in the semiconductor package 106 also allows for the placement of the exposed drain terminal 114 of the semiconductor die 112 over the traditional lands of a printed circuit board, thus allowing complete footprint compatibility with traditional packaging. As will be recognized, the omission of the above-described set of leads 82 in the semiconductor package 106 results in the exposed bottom surfaces of those leads included in the leadframe 108 extending along only one side of the package body 116 of the semiconductor package 102.

[0041] Referring now to Figures 10 and 11, there is shown a semiconductor package 118 constructed in accordance with a sixth embodiment of the present invention. The semiconductor package 118 is substantially similar to the above-described semiconductor package 106, except that the package body 116 of the semiconductor package 106 is omitted from the semiconductor package 118. In this regard, in the semiconductor package 118, a layer 119 of glob top encapsulant is applied to a portion of the above-described leadframe 108 included in the semiconductor package 118 as effectively encapsulates the conductive wire 121 used to electrically connect the sole lead of the leadframe 108 which is spaced from the die paddle 110 to the semiconductor die

112. Thus, as indicated above, no package body is included in the semiconductor package 118.

[0042] Referring now to Figure 12, there is shown a leadframe 120 for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a seventh embodiment of the present invention. The leadframe 120 comprises a die-attach paddle or die paddle 122 which has a generally quadrangular configuration defining four peripheral edge segments. The die paddle 122 defines a generally planar top surface 124 and an opposed, generally planar bottom surface 126. Formed within one of the corner regions of the die paddle 122 is a notch 127.

[0043] In addition to the die paddle 122, the leadframe 120 comprises a plurality of leads 128 which are each attached to and extend from respective ones of the peripheral edge segments of the die paddle 122. The leads 128 each define a top surface 130 and an opposed bottom surface 132. Each of the leads 128 further defines a half-etched surface 134 which is also disposed in opposed relation to the top surface 130 and is laterally offset or perpendicularly recessed relative to the bottom surface 132.

[0044] In addition to the leads 128, the leadframe 120 includes a plurality of leads 136 which also each define a top surface 138, a bottom surface 140 which is disposed in opposed relation to the top surface 138, and a half-etched surface 142 which is also disposed in opposed relation to the top surface 138 and laterally offset or perpendicularly recessed relative to the bottom surface 140. Each of the leads 136 further defines an enlarged inner end 144. In contrast to the leads 128, the leads 136 are not attached to the die paddle 122. Rather, one of the leads 136 is disposed along but spaced from that peripheral edge segment of the die paddle 122 having certain ones of the leads

128 attached thereto, with such lead 136 being proximate the notch 127 formed in the die paddle 122. The remaining leads 136 are disposed along but spaced from respective ones of two of the remaining peripheral edge segments of the die paddle 122. It is contemplated that the leadframe 120 will also be fabricated from a conductive metallic material.

[0045] The semiconductor package of the seventh embodiment constructed to include the leadframe 120 also includes a semiconductor die 146 which is identically configured to the above-described semiconductor die 32. The semiconductor die 146 includes a die body defining opposed, generally planar top and bottom surfaces. Disposed on the top surface of the die body is an enlarged, conductive source terminal 148. The source terminal 148 is itself generally quadrangular, but also includes a notch formed within one of the four corner regions thereof. Also disposed on the top surface of the die body in the notch defined by the source terminal 148 is a gate terminal 150. Disposed on the bottom surface of the die body of the semiconductor die 146 is an enlarged, conductive drain terminal (not shown).

[0046] Similar to the above-described embodiments of the semiconductor package, the source terminal 148 of the semiconductor die 146 is attached and thus electrically connected to the bottom surface 126 of the die paddle 122. Such connection is preferably accomplished through the use of solder, silver filled epoxy, or a suitable conductive adhesive. The attachment of the semiconductor die 146 to the bottom surface 126 of the die paddle 122 is accomplished such that the gate terminal 150 of the semiconductor die 146 is aligned with and thus exposed within the notch 127 of the die paddle 122 as is seen in Figure 12. The lead 136 which is disposed proximate the

notch 127 is electrically connected to the gate terminal 150 via a conductive wire 152 which extends to the top surface 138 of such lead 136 at the inner end 144 thereof.

[0047] Though not shown, the semiconductor package of the seventh embodiment of the present invention further comprises a package body which is formed in the same manner described above in relation to the semiconductor package 62 of the third embodiment. In this regard, the semiconductor package of the seventh embodiment is substantially similar in construction to the semiconductor package 62 of the third embodiment, with the sole distinction being the inclusion of the leads 128, 136 which extend along all four peripheral edge segments of the die paddle 122, as opposed to extending along only an opposed pair of the peripheral edge segments of the die paddle 122 as is the case with the leads 74, 82 and die paddle 66 of the leadframe 64 included in the semiconductor package 62 of the third embodiment. Thus, in the semiconductor package constructed in accordance with the seventh embodiment, the outer, distal ends of the leads 128, 136 are exposed in and substantially flush with respective ones of multiple side surfaces defined by the package body, with the drain terminal of the semiconductor die 146 and the bottom surfaces 132, 140 of the leads 128, 136 being exposed in and substantially flush with the bottom surface of the package body. The encapsulant material used to form the package body also underfills and thus covers the half-etched surfaces 134, 142 of the leads 128, 136.

[0048] Referring now to Figure 13, there is shown a leadframe 154 for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with an eighth embodiment of the present invention. The leadframe 154 of the eighth embodiment is substantially similar in construction to the above-described leadframe 120. In this

regard, the sole distinction between the leadframes 120, 154 is that the die paddle 156 of the leadframe 154 is made smaller than the die paddle 122 of the leadframe 120. As is seen in Figure 13, the size difference between the die paddle 122, 156 is such that the source terminal 148 of the above-described semiconductor die 146 may be attached to the bottom surface 158 of the die paddle 156 in a manner wherein a peripheral edge portion of the semiconductor die 146 is not covered by the die paddle 156 and thus exposed. That portion of the semiconductor die 146 which is exposed includes the gate terminal 150 and optionally a portion of the source terminal 48. The smaller size of the die paddle 156 in the leadframe 154 and resultant exposure of the gate terminal 150 of the semiconductor die 146 thus eliminates the need for the notch 127 included in the die paddle 122 of the leadframe 120.

[0049] Referring now to Figure 14, there is shown a leadframe 160 for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a ninth embodiment of the present invention. The leadframe 160 is also substantially similar in construction to the above-described leadframe 120. However, the die paddle 162 of the leadframe 160 also does not include the above-described notch 127 disposed in the die paddle 122 of the leadframe 120. Rather, disposed in the die paddle 162 of the leadframe 160 is an aperture 164. The aperture 164 is oriented such that when the source terminal 148 of the above-described semiconductor die 146 is attached to the bottom surface 166 of the die paddle 162, the gate terminal 150 of the semiconductor die 146 is substantially aligned with the aperture 164, thus allowing one end of the above-described conductive wire 152 to be advanced to the gate terminal 150.

[0050] Referring now to Figure 15, there is shown a leadframe 168 for use in a semiconductor package constructed in accordance with a tenth embodiment of the present invention. The leadframe 168 comprises a first subassembly 170 which bears substantial structural similarity to the leadframe 10 of the first embodiment described above. More particularly, the first subassembly 170 comprises a die paddle 172 which has a generally quadrangular configuration. The die paddle 172 defines a generally planar top surface 174 and an opposed, generally planar bottom surface 176. Formed within one of the corner regions of the die paddle 172 is a notch 178.

[0051] In addition to the die paddle 172, the first subassembly 170 comprises a plurality of elongate leads 180 which are attached to and extend from respective ones of an opposed pair of peripheral edge segments of the die paddle 172. The leads 180 each define a top surface 182 and an opposed bottom surface 184. In addition to the leads 180, the first subassembly 170 includes a single lead 186 which also defines a top surface 188 and an opposed bottom surface 190. In contrast to the leads 180, the lead 186 is not attached to the die paddle 172. Rather, the lead 186 defines an enlarged inner end 192 which is disposed in spaced relation to the die paddle 172 proximate the notch 178 formed therein. It is contemplated that the die paddle 172 and leads 180, 186 will be fabricated from a conductive metallic material. As shown in Figure 15, a total of three leads 180 are depicted as being connected to the die paddle 172, though those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that fewer or greater numbers of leads 180 may be included in the first subassembly 170.

[0052] The first subassembly 170 of the leadframe 168 further includes a semiconductor die 194 including a die body defining

opposed, generally planar top and bottom surfaces. Disposed on the top surface of the die body is an enlarged, conductive source terminal 196. The source terminal 196 also includes a notch formed within one of the four corner regions thereof. Also disposed on the top surface of the die body in the notch defined by the source terminal 196 is a gate terminal 198. Disposed on the bottom surface of the die body of the semiconductor die 194 is an enlarged, conductive drain terminal (not shown).

[0053] The source terminal 196 of the semiconductor die 194 is attached and thus electrically connected to the bottom surface 176 of the die paddle 172. Such connection is preferably accomplished through the use of solder, silver filled epoxy, or a suitable conductive adhesive. The attachment of the semiconductor die 194 to the bottom surface 176 is accomplished such that the gate terminal 198 of the semiconductor die 194 is aligned with and thus exposed within the notch 178 of the die paddle 172. In the first subassembly 170 of the leadframe 168, the leads 180, 186 are each bent to assume the configuration shown in Figure 15. More particularly, the leads 180, 186 are bent such that portions of the bottom surfaces 184, 190 thereof adjacent the distal ends are downset relative to the bottom surface 176 of the die paddle 172. In this regard, the leads 180, 186 are preferably bent such that the distal portions of the bottom surfaces 184, 190 extend in generally co-planar relation to the drain terminal of the semiconductor die 194. In the first subassembly 170, the lead 186 which is spaced from the die paddle 172 is electrically connected to the gate terminal 198 via a conductive wire 199 which extends to the top surface 188 of the lead 186.

[0054] In addition to the first subassembly 170, the leadframe 168 comprises a second subassembly 200 which is identically configured to the first subassembly 170 and disposed in spaced, side-by-side relation thereto in the manner shown in Figure 15. Though not shown, the semiconductor package of the tenth embodiment further comprises a package body which is substantially similar in construction to the above-described package body 42 of the semiconductor package 12. In this regard, the package body of the tenth embodiment is formed to partially encapsulate the first and second subassemblies 170, 200 such that portions of the leads 180, 186 of the first subassembly 170 and the leads of the second subassembly 200 protrude from the package body, with the drain terminals of the semiconductor die 194 of the first subassembly 170 and the semiconductor die of the second subassembly 200 being exposed in and substantially flush with the bottom surface of the package body. Thus, the semiconductor package of the tenth embodiment includes multiple semiconductor dies in a single semiconductor package configuration. Though not shown, those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that other embodiments of the semiconductor package may be similarly modified to include more than one semiconductor die.

[0055] This disclosure provides exemplary embodiments of the present invention. The scope of the present invention is not limited by these exemplary embodiments. Numerous variations, whether explicitly provided for by the specification or implied by the specification, such as variations in structure, dimension, type of material and manufacturing process may be implemented by one of skill in the art in view of this disclosure. For example, in those embodiments of the leadframe which include two sets of leads extending along respective ones

of an opposed pair of peripheral edge segments of the corresponding die paddle, such leads may extend along either an opposed pair of lateral peripheral edge segments or an opposed pair of longitudinal peripheral edge segments in the event the die paddle is rectangular. Additionally, in any embodiment of the leadframe of the present invention, the die paddle may be generally square, with the corresponding leads extending along any opposed pair or any adjacent pair of peripheral edge segments thereof, or along all four peripheral edge segments in the case of the quad configurations shown in Figures 12-14. Moreover, alternative attachment methods such as a flip-chip type attachment or solder bump methods may be employed to facilitate the attachment of the source terminal of any semiconductor die to the bottom surface of the corresponding die paddle.